

REMARKS

Claims 1-15, 21, and 22 are pending in this application. Claims 1-15 and 21 are rejected, Claim 22 is new. Claims 1 and 11 are amended. Support for the amendments can be found at least in paragraphs [0010], [0022], [0027], [0030-0032], and [0036]. Reconsideration of the rejections in view of the following remarks is requested.

I. 35 U.S.C. 103(a) Rejection

The Office rejected Claims 1-15 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,146,705 to Heine (hereinafter "Heine") in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,525,779 to Hawkins (hereinafter "Hawkins"). Neither Heine or Hawkins teach or suggest a fiber mat having a water-based urethane modifier. The urethane modifiers described by Hawkins are all solvent based polyurethanes and would be incompatible with Heine or the present invention, which describe aqueous based processes. The Hawkins and Heine systems are completely incompatible and the Hawkins polyurethanes would not be effective when combined with the resin in Heine. There would be no motivation to combine the two references. Further, Heine uses an acrylic latex modifier in place of a urethane modifier. Therefore, there would be no motivation or evidence to suggest that an additional modifier would be necessary. It would repetitive to do so.

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the Heine and Hawkins references, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose the claimed

invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

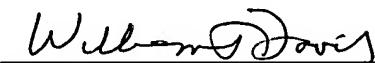
III. Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims of the present application define patentable subject matter and that the application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number below.

Attached is a petition for a one month extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

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